

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, NEUCHATEL - QUARTERLY REPORT

DIVISION : QUALITY ASSURANCE + TECHNICAL SERVICES
SUBJECT TITLE : MATERIAL TESTING
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KEYWORDS : Force, blank, sliding, spring, crushing, filter, tipping, paper, inner foil, varnish, bundle.

INCOMING INSPECTION FOR FTR

The incoming inspection of non-tobacco materials used by FTR gave the following results :

- 463 deliveries were inspected
- 36 deliveries were refused

Refusals concerned : 8 cigarette material supplies
29 packaging material supplies

Incoming inspection of inner foil for mentholation for affiliates continued.

QUALIFICATION TRIALS

The qualification trials for cigarette and packaging materials carried out during the reporting period were guided by the objectives of :

- improving the quality of our products
- standardizing the materials used in Europe
- evaluating alternative suppliers

Display cartons MAJ-CH

New MAJ display cartons were tested on the machine to check the resistance of the gold bronze offset printing. These tests were positive and displays were produced for Marketing. Badly converted display cartons had the design off-center, of which the supplier was informed.

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Inner foil

In order to qualify a second supplier an initial trial was made on the HLP 5 with inner foil used for the MLK cigarette. The test was positive, an industrial trial will be made with this material.

In order to qualify a second supplier on the 80mm segment of aluminium foil used on the HLP2, an industrial trial was made. The test was negative due to bad foldings on the finished product.

In order to qualify a second supplier on the 116mm and 111mm segment of aluminium foil used on the GD-X1, initial trials were made. The tests were negative due to sliding problems on the machine. A new trial will be made.

In order to eliminate the lacquered foil used at FTR, a special trial was made with an inner foil with an "abrasion resistant coating". The test was positive, however the foil cannot be used for mentholation.

A trial with a 7/30 quality inner aluminium foil was tested on the GD-X2 with the objective of improving runnability. The test was positive, however management still has to decide whether they will accept a price increase due to the higher paper grammage.

Teartape

Industrial trials were made with new types of teartape which should replace the actual one which adheres with hotmelt. The trials were negative due to bad aspect of the finished product.

HL blanks

A series of new HL die cuts were tested on the MLZ brand in order to improve runnability and finished product quality. The objectives were to select the most appropriate HL die cut out of the various versions tested. One version showed positive results, but some improvements have still to be made on it.

Polypropylene

In order to requalify the process of a polypropylene supplier, various initial trials were made on different production machines in order to check runnability and finished product quality. Results were positive.

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ASSISTANCE TO LICENSEES AND HEADQUARTERS

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Various tests were carried out upon request.

SUPPLIER CONTACTS

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Correlation program continuing.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

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An instrument evaluation for the measurement of diffuse reflectance factors of papers and boards was made. The application is for brightness, opacity and colour measurements. The most appropriate instrument was chosen for Philip Morris Europe applications.

The area Material Monitoring and Incoming Inspection have been partially reorganized. All information on material release and blocked material is now made via computer, thus decreasing inspection lead time and giving faster availability of the material for production if found to conform to PM requirements.

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